

# History of Science/Medical History 212

Bodies, Diseases and Healers:

An Introduction to the History of Medicine

Fall 2023

Rm 180 Science Hall

Lectures: Mon/Wed 8:50 AM – 9:40 AM

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Instructor: Nick Jacobson (he/him)	TA: David Advent	TA: Matt Ferens
Off. Hrs.: Tues. 2:00-4:00*	Off. Hrs.: By appt.	Off. Hrs.: By appt.
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\*Or by appointment

## Course Summary

This course is a survey of different conceptions of how the body as a site of sickness and health has been understood from Antiquity to contemporary medicine. It includes consideration of the origins and evolution of public health, the changing social role of healers, and the emergence of the modern “standardized” body in health and illness. We aim to give you an overview of the development of the modern medical system while encouraging you to think about medicine in a historical context. Given this framing, some forms of healing that fall outside professional Western medicine are left out or underrepresented in our course content. This is a reflection of the particular story 212 is telling and not an indication of what ways of thinking about health are valid, true, and relevant to the history of medicine. Beginning with the ancient Mediterranean world, we will examine how technologies, diagnoses, and ways of thinking about the body have changed over time through four broad trends in healing: humoralism, pathological anatomy, infection, and risk. We will address questions such as who has done healing over time? How have patients chosen healers? What constitutes health and disease? What are the causes and treatments of disease? Examining these questions requires us to engage with humanities methods. In this course we will be reading and analyzing secondary historical sources in light of materials presented in lecture, as well as crafting our own historical arguments using primary and secondary sources. We will be thinking about how to use historical evidence and structure arguments to make compelling claims about medicine in historical context. In so doing we will see that while medicine has undoubtedly helped relieve suffering and extend lives, the evolution of medical systems is not a story of linear progress or a benign accrual of facts. Rather medical systems are embedded in the socio-cultural context of their given historical moment.

## Course Description

Credits: 3

Course Designations and Attributes:

Hist Sci 212

Breadth – Humanities

Level – Elementary

L&S Credit – Counts as LAS credit in L&S

Requisites: None  
Instructional Modality: In-Person

## Explanation of Credit Hours

The credit standard for this 3-credit course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course’s learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit or 9 hours per week), which include regularly scheduled meeting times (group seminar meetings of 115 minutes per week), dedicated online time, reading, writing, individual consultations with the instructor, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

## Course Requirements and Grading

- 1.) Attendance of lectures and discussion sections.
- 2.) Preparation of weekly readings for every weekly discussion section.
- 3.) One in-class exam on units 1-3 of the course.
- 4.) Composition of 1 abstract and a process paper (a rough draft and revised final draft) over the course of the semester.

Here is the breakdown of graded assignments:

Participation/Attendance in Lecture (“Linking” questions; 3 absences waived no questions asked, the rest will be deducted from grade)	15%
Participation/Attendance in Discussion Section (see TA syllabi for details)	20%
Abstract paper – Produce an abstract for a source from between weeks 2 and 4 of the course (Due <b>Friday, September 29</b> )	10%
Exam – Content appraisal covering readings, lectures, and discussion from Units 1-3 (Held <b>Wednesday, October 25</b> )	20%
Question Development – Identify and summarize sources of interest to develop a historical question you can answer in the compass of an essay (Due <b>Friday, October 13</b> )	5%
Paper Draft – Using at least 3 sources, write a 3-5 page (double-spaced) essay making an historical argument. (Due <b>Friday November 10</b> )	10%
<u>Final Paper Revised (Due <b>Friday, December 15</b>)</u>	<u>20%</u>
Total	100%

**Letter Grade**    **Grade Percent**

<b>A</b>	93-100
<b>AB</b>	88-92
<b>B</b>	83-87
<b>BC</b>	78-82
<b>C</b>	70-77
<b>D</b>	60-69

## Course Website

We will be using Canvas, an interactive course website, for providing all readings and lecture slides, distributing writing assignments and handouts and for important website links and other information. To access the Canvas site for HSCI 212, follow these two steps:

- 1.) Go to <http://learnuw.wisc.edu>, or access it from the UW home page. Click on “Canvas” and then click on “Login to Canvas.” Type in your username and password to get to the next screen, which is your Canvas “portal page.” Notice that on this page there is a red “Help” button in the upper right-hand corner to click on if you have any trouble navigating to the site or getting any of the information. The Help Desk is available to assist you around the clock for navigation issue, so please contact this number: 608-264-HELP.
- 2.) Once on your Canvas portal page, you will see a column called “My Courses,” which will list all your UW courses that have a Canvas website. Look for “Fall 2023-24;” you may need to expand that semester by clicking on the “>” button. Click on the link under this heading for “HSCI 212” and you’ll arrive next at the course website.

## Course Learning Outcomes and Course Credit Expectations

- 1.) In this course, students will read and analyze primary and secondary source texts pertaining to the history of modern medicine. Students will take notes on and recall specific details and overarching themes from the course readings, lectures, and discussion.
- 2.) In written assignments and exams, students are asked to master the content of the course. As part of mastering the content, students will learn:
  - a.) about the methods that medical practitioners and healers have developed to arrive at reliable knowledge about health, healing, and the body
  - b.) that the medical sciences, like all human enterprises, have a history, have changed, and will continue to do so in time
  - c.) that modern medical practices and institutions have long traditions that are deeply rooted in the past
  - d.) that medical knowledge has been shaped by the social and cultural contexts out of

which it emerged

3.) In addition, students will develop historically sensitive critical thinking skills that will enable them to:

- a.) break down complex historical problems into manageable parts through the close analysis of texts
- b.) bring together multiple topics and themes introduced in the course to make synthetic judgments about the historical development of the sciences
- c.) communicate clearly and with the support of evidence their knowledge of topics in the history of medicine, both in written and oral formats

4.) This course meets for two 50-minute lecture periods and one discussion section each week throughout the semester, and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, studying, etc.) for about 2 hours outside of the classroom for every class period. The syllabus includes additional information about meeting times and due dates for student work below.

## Course Policies

1.) Any student who thinks they may be eligible for special accommodations, please contact the **McBurney Disability Resource Center** at 608-263-2741 or <http://mcburney.wisc.edu/students/howto.php>.

The McBurney Center will determine what services you may be eligible for, and then we will be able to work with you to meet your needs for the course. Please contact your TA and instructor at the beginning of the semester, so that we can decide upon the best accommodations for you as soon as possible. Any such requests will remain confidential.

2.) If you cannot attend class for a justifiable reason (e.g. illness, religious observance, family necessity etc.), please contact your TA as soon as possible so that you can duly prepare any make-up assignments and keep up with the schedule of the course. For the sake of the student and the TA, due dates of assignments are strictly enforced. Plan well ahead to ensure that you can meet course deadlines.

3.) Academic honesty is essential to student success and is central to the mission of the university (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/>). In keeping with the university's commitment to academic integrity, all work submitted must be one's own. Plagiarism is not tolerated, and will result in academic disciplinary action.

## Reading Materials

All readings for this course will be made available electronically on Canvas for the course HSCI 212.

## Course Schedule

## Unit 1: Humoral Bodies and Healing

### **Week 1**

Wednesday, 9/6: *Course Introduction: Thinking About Medicine Historically*

Readings:

Lecture and Discussion Syllabi.

### **Week 2**

Monday, 9/11: *Between Magic and “The Greek Miracle”*

Wednesday, 9/13: *Mapping the Humoral Body*

Readings:

Selections from the Hippocratic Corpus - “On the Sacred Disease”

G. E. R. Lloyd – “The Transformations of Ancient Medicine” in *Bulletin of the Hist. of Medicine*

### **Week 3**

Monday, 9/18: *Ancient Anatomy and Surgery*

Wednesday, 9/20: *Galenic Medicine*

Readings:

Selections from Galen’s - “On the Natural Faculties” (Parts I and II)

Vivian Nutton - “Alexandria, Anatomy, and Experimentation” in *Ancient Medicine*

Julius Rocca’s Book Review of Nutton’s book *Ancient Medicine*

Christopher Cosans – “Galen’s Critique of Rationalist and Empiricist Anatomy” in *Jour. of the Hist. of Biology*

### **Week 4**

Monday, 9/25: *Communities of Healing and the Rise of the Hospital*

Wednesday, 9/27: *Circulation of Knowledge and the Black Death*

Readings:

Michael Dols – “Insanity in Byzantine and Islamic Medicine” in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*

Pippo Carmon – “Who Really Discovered How the Heart Works?” in *JSTOR Daily*

Boccaccio – “Introduction” to the *Decameron*

Shona Kelly Wray – “Boccaccio and the Doctors” in *Journal of Medieval History*

**Friday, 9/29 “Abstract Paper” due in Canvas Dropbox at 11:59 PM.**

## Unit 2: Anatomized Bodies

### **Week 5**

Monday 10/2: *Markets and Guilds*

Wednesday, 10/4: *Vesalius and Renaissance*

Reading:

O’Boyle – “Surgical texts and Social Contexts” in *Practical Medicine*

Vesalius – “Preface” in *De Humani Corporis Fabrica Libri Septem*

Katherine Park – “Introduction” in *Secrets of Women*

### **Week 6**

Monday, 10/9: *Medicine in the Early Modern Atlantic World*

Wednesday, 10/11: *Anatomy Microcosm and Macrocosm*

Readings:

Pablo Gómez – “Social Pharmacopeias” in *The Experiential Caribbean*

Londa Schiebinger – “Exotic Abortifacients” in *Endeavour*

O’Boyle – “Astrology and Medicine in Late Medieval England” in *Sudhoff’s Archive*

**Friday, 10/13 Question Development due in Canvas Dropbox at 11:59 PM.**

### **Week 7**

Monday, 10/16: *Anatomical Pathology*

Wednesday, 10/18: *The Paris Clinical School*

Readings:

Morgagni – “Author’s Preface” in *On the Seats and Causes of Disease*

Michel Foucault – “The Lesson of Hospitals” in *Birth of the Clinic*

Tim Stainton – “Sensationalism and the Construction of Intellectual Disability” in *Intellectual Disability*

## **Unit 3: Infected Bodies**

### **Week 8**

Monday, 10/23: *Urbanization, Epidemics, and Inoculation*

Wednesday, 10/25: **MIDTERM EXAM (IN CLASS)**

Readings:

Margot Minardi – “The Boston Inoculation Controversy of 1721-1722” in *The William and Mary Quarterly*

Jacquelyn C. Miller – “The Wages of Blackness” in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*

Absalom Jones and Richard Allen – “A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People, During the Late Awful Calamity in Philadelphia, in the Year 1793”

### **Week 9**

Monday, 10/30: *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Medical Marketplace*

Wednesday, 11/1: *Medical Research and Exploitation*

Readings:

John Henry Warner – “Power, Conflict, and Identity” in *Journal. of American Hist.*

Diedre Cooper-Owens – “The Birth of American Gynecology” in *Medical Bondage*

### **Week 10**

Monday, 11/6: *Professionalization of Nursing*

Wednesday, 11/8: *The Germ Theory of Disease*

Readings:

Sandra Holton – “Feminine Authority and Social Order” in *Social Analysis*

Louis Pasteur – “On the Germ Theory” in *Science*  
Judy Leavitt – “‘Typhoid Mary’ Strikes Back” in *Isis*

**Friday, 11/10 Paper Draft due in Canvas Dropbox at 11:59 PM.**

#### **Unit 4: “Normal” Bodies**

##### ***Week 11***

Monday, 11/13: *The “Normalized” Body*

Wednesday, 11/15: *Public Health*

Readings:

Jacques Véron and Jean-Marc Rohrbasser, “The Normal Length of Life as an Expression of the ‘Nature of Things’” in *Population*

Wendy Mariner – “*Jacobson v. Massachusetts*: It’s Not Your Great-Great-Grandfather’s Public Health Law” in *Government, Politics, and Law*

Warwick Anderson – “Immunization and Hygiene in the Colonial Philippines” in *Journ. of Hist. of Med.*

##### ***Week 12***

Monday, 11/20: *Hospital and Medical School Reform*

Readings:

Carleton B. Chapman – “‘The Flexner Report’ by Abraham Flexner” in *Daedalus*

Harriet A. Washington – “Apology Shines Light on Racial Schism in Medicine” in *New York Times*

#### **THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO LECTURE 11/22)**

##### ***Week 13***

Monday, 11/27: *Eugenics*

Wednesday, 11/29: *Midwifery and Access to Birth Control*

Readings:

Alexander Sanger – “Eugenics, Race, and Margaret Sanger Revisited” in *Hypatia*

Thomas Cargill – “Eugenics in High School History” in *The Independent Review*

Leslie Reagan – “Linking Midwives and Abortion in the Progressive Era” in *Bull. of Hist. of Med.*

##### ***Week 14***

Monday, 12/4: *Military Medicine and Quantifying Risk*

Wednesday, 12/6: *The Role of Medical Technology in Patient Care and Healthcare Cost*

Readings:

Beth Linker – “The Limb Lab and the Engineering of Manly Bodies” in *War’s Waste*

Joel Howell – “Physicians, Patients, and Medical Technology” in *Technology in the Hospital*

##### ***Week 15***

Monday, 12/11: *Paying for Health Care*

Wednesday, 12/13: *Concluding Thoughts*

Readings:

John Murray – “The Persistence of the Health Insurance Dilemma” in *Social Science History*

Jill Quadango – “Cost Containment vs National Health Insurance” in *One Nation Uninsured*

**Friday, 12/15 Revised Final Paper due in Canvas Dropbox at 11:59 PM.**